ENRICHED GOTHIC MOULDINGS.

I THINK we should accept no theory that our experience compels us to believe incapable of *standing the test of facts*. I, therefore, must reject that of Mr. Little on the subject of "Enriched Gothic Mouldings," from a conviction that he has gone too far, and has on insufficient data advanced statements that cannot be substantiated.

It is surely incorrect to quote Vitruvius and his theory of the triglyph as bearing any analogy to the case in point. For in a society so peculiarly constituted (be it remembered) as that of the Freemasons, in which *so much unity existed*, it is only just and reasonable to conclude that had the rejection of "Enriched Mouldings" been the "result of a principle laid down" by themselves, then *no instance* would have been found of a departure therefrom.

I think that few persons who have gone through a laborious study of our English architecture will readily discard from their folios the valuable matter they have gathered from "sedilia, tombstones," *monuments*, and other accessories of our ancient ecclesiastical buildings as being unworthy *the name of architecture* (as Mr. Little seems to imply); but, on the contrary, will rather confess with me a deep debt of gratitude as owing not only to the able men who produced them, but also to the many who have since preserved them unexterminated to the present time, and moreover will be willing to view them as the most pure and correct evidences of the gradual changes that have taken place in the character and details of our architecture up to the time when, by the dissolution of the monasteries, a sudden and violent stop was put to its further development; and, furthermore, will be with me convinced that it was upon these very "subordinate works of art" that the greatest care, study, and skill were not only bestowed, but absolutely lavished, by the architects of the middle ages. I therefore think that these have even *a prior* claim upon our attention in the endeavour to ascertain the principles which governed our forefathers in the formation of their wondrous designs.

With these feelings I sent you the two specimens alluded to, believing that they would prove too unexceptionable to render it necessary for me to encroach further on your valuable space or kind indulgence.

The sketch from *a finial* of the sedilia at Exeter Cathedral was (as I stated) but one of many others therein, similar but various in design; and I may here further observe, that where these *enriched* necking moulds occur on a low level, they have a small mould on *the top*, as well as the bottom of the enriched portion, as it were, clipping it closely to the shaft, and leaving the enrichment as the *prominent feature* in the centre.

This may prove that I am not mistaken "in regarding the carving on the foot of the finial, as a portion of the necking mould," for it clearly is so, and not as he supposes it to be, "the first swelling of the foliage of the finial;" for it does not *most distantly* resemble this in either character or design, and is moreover nearly unconnected with it, having only the stalks of the foliage running down and stopping upon it abruptly: this and the other examples referred to are of *pure Decorated character*.

Regarding the other example, I am wholly at a loss to understand upon what ground this is considered as "evidently Norman." I can only say that the carving of the effigy, the foliage, and other ornaments are distinctly of Early English character, and that the moulding in question harmonises perfectly with it in every respect. Besides, by assigning this monument to Bishop Simon de Apulia (in which I believe he is correct), it is shown that the Early English style had prevailed some *thirty or forty years* even at the period of his death. And, again, have we an example of an enriched moulding in the *Norman* style bearing the least resemblance to this one? I think not: at all events, I recollect none.

I sent you no example of the Perpendicular period, not that this style is excluded from Mr. Little's period of "four hundred years," but because I feared he might consider it as belonging to a period sufficiently late to be classed as "debased."

I cannot think it necessary, at least *in our days*, that Mr. Little should call in the aid of his theory to establish or increase the honour so decidedly due to our forefathers as the originators of the style we appropriately term Early English, for I cannot conceive myself why it should be thought a thing improbable that the style should have sprung, naturally and gradually, from the study and application of the Norman by men of refined minds. I think it would be an easy matter (from the examples which remain to us) to establish this fact beyond all controversy, simply by bringing together various specimens, showing, first, *the severe*—simple, square, and massive in proportions and details—through the *richer*, to the highly enriched period; then to its gradual refinement in the elongated proportions,—slender detached shafts, smaller mouldings in greater profusion and variety, with less enrichments, &c. &c. This done, it could scarcely be considered a very marvellous thing that some one of the many highly talented men of the period should have suggested to his mind the simple probability that the pointed arch (*shown* by the interlacing of their own arches, which probably was of recent application) *would harmonize the better with the state of refinement to which they had brought their style, than the semicircular form hitherto used*; and, consequently at once tried the experiment that resulted in its partial, and ultimately in its universal, use.

May I ask if this theory is not more rational, and far more probable than to suppose that a sudden leap was taken from the rich exuberance of the Norman to the elegant refinement of the Early English style, or than the absurd theory of its introduction to this country from far distant lands?

W. H. B.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE Railway Board is now dissolved, in pursuance of the Act of Parliament passed on 7th August last. The officers appointed by the Commissioners are to be continued, subject to the orders of the Board of Trade.——In a recent case at Reading, the County Court judge decided, notwithstanding a notice by the Great Western Company, "That they will not, under any circumstances, be liable for goods should any claim arise from delay, detention, or any other cause,"—that if a train was five or six hours late, and that by that delay any goods were injured, the company were liable. It was no argument in their favour to say that the train was so heavy that they could not proceed quickly. Putting a greater quantity of luggage in the carriages than could be conveyed was tantamount to putting clogs on the wheels to prevent the carriages travelling at their usual speed.—Mr. Slocombe said that if the goods had not been attached to the train at the various stations they must have been left behind.—His Honour said that in that case they must have more trains, or else reduce their traffic. He should give a verdict for the plaintiff for the amount sought. It was intimated that this case was only the forerunner of hundreds more of a similar nature. The "notice" by the company seems to be simply a ridiculous attempt to take the law into its own hands. Railway companies, in whose hands the highways of the empire are entirely monopolized, would really appear just to require to be kept short by the head, with stout legal reins cast over them, since they imagine that all that they have to do to rid themselves of responsibility is just to issue notices that they *won't* be responsible. Only think of the next probable "notice," had the one now in question been held to be legal, or legislative rather:—"Notice: The *Great* Western Railway Company will not, under any circumstances, be liable for the safety of passengers should any claim arise from accidents, injuries, deaths, or any other cause!" A new fountain of legislation would have thus been at once established, the issue and ultimatum of which it is not easy to see, although the uniform direction of its current, we dare say, would be obvious enough.——The eight metropolitan lines of railway had *an increase* of 821,863*l.* on their traffic for twenty-three weeks of this year, ending October 11, *over and above* that of the correspondent period of last year. The extra receipts from the exhibition itself the *Times* estimates at 557,483*l.*! half a million—besides a small item of 37,000*l.* in addition! "It thus appears," remarks the *Times*, "that immense as have been the receipts of the Exhibition itself, the receipts of the eight metropolitan lines from the same source have been greater. Nay, it is evident that it would have answered their purpose to defray all the expenses of the Exhibition, and hand over the whole of the 505,000*l.*, received for admission, &c., to the Royal Commissioners, to be applied as they please! If this suggestion is too late for this year, it is in good time for another, and for many more yet to come. Notwithstanding the great reduction of fares made by all the railways to meet the general class of visitors, that reduction may be carried still further, or rather the accommodation given for the same fares may be greatly increased, and yet leave a handsome profit to the companies. Further, we beg to suggest, whether it will not answer the purpose of the metropolitan railways to contribute towards maintaining periodical and even permanent attractions of the same sort; such, for example, as would be implied in the notion of a winter garden used occasionally for entertainments and exhibitions. Of course it would be ridiculous to expect that so great an occasion as that we have witnessed could be sustained; but something on a less scale, and varying from year to year, might answer the purpose." This is a year that seems likely to open the eyes, as well as to fill the pockets, of the railway companies. No positive loss of traffic, moreover, has been sustained in any direction, except in a few special instances. The aggregate traffic of all the railways of the United Kingdom, from January 1 to October 11, is greater than that for the same period of last year by no less an amount than 1,581,604*l.*, and nearly three millions greater than that of same period in 1849. In fine it is still more satisfactory to know that "the money spent on the Exhibition by its provincial visitors has been generally rather saved beforehand than borrowed at the time, so that we need not apprehend a reaction such as usually follows an improvident expenditure."——Nearly 2,000 men and between 300 and 400 horses are in active operation in the formation of the line from Shrewsbury to Hereford. The viaduct over the low land on the sides of the river Rea at Shrewsbury has been completed, and the bridge over the expanse of the Abbey Foregate will shortly be advanced. In excavating for one of the piers, at a depth of 10 feet from the surface, was discovered a portion of an old stone wall connected with the abbey, and on the other side were found the remains of an old bridge, supposed to have formerly led to a monastery over the adjacent marshy ground. The bridges throughout the line are nearly finished. The cuttings and excavations and permanent way are also being rapidly pushed on. Ten stations will be erected between Shrewsbury and Ludlow. The gradients throughout, with one exception, are said to be not more than 1 in 100. The railway to Ludlow is to be opened by Christmas.——Measures are being taken for the formation of a dock and railway at the Low Lights, mouth of the Tyne, in connection with coal fields in the district.——The most productive railway in Germany is said to be that from Furth to Nuremberg, which is at the same time the shortest and the oldest of the lines on the Germanic territory. This line, which is only about a league and a quarter French measure (about 3½ miles English), was constructed at a cost of 200,000 florins (500,000*l.*). The gross receipts, in 1850, amounted to 55,336 florins, and the expenses to 31,471 florins, leaving to the shareholders a net profit of 26,861 florins, or 13½ per cent. on the capital. During the fifteen years that this line has existed more than seven millions of persons have passed over it, out of whom only one passenger has met with any injury, and that was by his own imprudence.

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